



"INDEPENDENT IN ALL THINGS. NEUTRAL IN NONE."

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HARRISON AT LAST

Is Called to Account at Iroquois Theater Inquest and Confesses Laws Were Not Enforced.

He Then Makes a Ridiculous but Evidently Vain Attempt to Shift the Responsibility.

People Now Ask Why the Mayor Ordered Theaters Closed Immediately After the Disaster

If They Are to Be Allowed to Reopen Un-Changed a Few Days Later.

It Is Nothing but Yellow Kid Buncombe—Council Wrestles with Emasculated Fire Ordinance.

Mayor Harrison has at last been called to account at the Iroquois Theater inquest.

On Wednesday last he was before the Coroner's jury and was closely questioned for nearly an hour.

The chief executive of the city of Chicago then and there confessed that the building ordinances had not been enforced and that the violations of the law had been known to him.

This extraordinary confession is no surprise to those who have for any length of time observed the course of the present city administration, but we are much mistaken if it does not have a profound effect upon the general public.

But amazing as is the confession of Mayor Harrison, the excuse which he offers is still more so.

"Public sentiment would not have sustained enforcement of the law," says the Mayor.

This is an insult to the public which will be resented. It is an excuse that will not operate to shift the responsibility.

Evidently it did not go with the jury either if one is to judge by the questioning of the foreman.

The idea of a public servant trying to hold the people responsible for his own failure to do his duty is simply preposterous.

What did the people elect Harrison Mayor of Chicago for?

Was it to enforce the laws or to wink at their violation?

The Mayor admits before the Coroner's jury that his duty was to revoke the licenses of violators of the law in this case and to close the theaters, yet what he did do was to send the report of the violations to the City Council for consideration, and while it was lying pigeonholed there nearly 600 lives were lost in the Iroquois Theater fire.

And here occurs two other questions: Was not the referring of the Commissioner's report to the Council another attempt to dodge responsibility?

Was the Mayor afraid to do his duty?

These are hard facts coupled with pertinent questions and Harrison will have to face them, try to shift and disclaim responsibility as he may.

Within two weeks from the date of the Iroquois Theater fire horror, the Harrison administration has announced that the playhouses of Chicago, closed for more than a week, may open up and resume business again "under certain conditions."

This announcement came of course as a shock to the sorrowing friends of the six hundred victims of that awful holocaust, but evidently this was a consideration unworthy of being entertained by the Harrison administration.

But the question which particularly interests the public of Chicago just now is, What did Harrison order the theaters closed for last week?

Simply because they were being run in violation of the building ordinance endangering human life?

That being the case what are they now being allowed to open for?

Has the danger to human life which existed last week been since removed? Hardly.

But the whole incident only serves to throw a strong light upon the or-

ganized sham, hypocrisy and cheap buncombe that we have here in Chicago masquerading as a city administration.

Has anything been done to render the theaters safe since Dec. 30, 1903, when six hundred human beings perished in flames in the theater that Harrison pronounced the safest in Chicago?

Absolutely nothing.

The Chicago Eagle does not go so far as to say that all the theaters of Chicago are unsafe, though it believes that most of them are; but Harrison has said so most emphatically. He has declared the Iroquois to be the safest in Chicago; what then could have been his opinion of the rest?

Yet in the face of this the Harrison administration is willing to permit all the theaters to reopen.

Oct. 1 has been fixed as the date by which the provisions of the new ordinance for the reconstruction of the theaters and the safe-guarding of life shall be in operation; until then the public will have to take its chances of another fire horror.

There is no excuse for this latest exploit of the city administration. Either Harrison had no grounds at all for ordering these places of amusement closed two days after the catastrophe or he has no business permitting them to open up now.

That was a rousing celebration the County Democracy held on Sunday last. It is stated that the absence of Robert E. Burke was taken advantage of to pronounce eulogiums upon him.

It is evident the Pay-roll Brigade was not in a majority there, as the members of that detectable outfit generally take advantage of a man's absence to do other things to him.

The Iroquois Club will sound the key note of the campaign, it is announced, at a banquet to be given by that organization April 13.

President A. J. Tooten, of the County Democracy, says the receiver who has charge of the club's affairs will force the collection of back dues, thereby making the job-holding members, who are the delinquents, "either fish or cut bait." If cutting bait means a chance to "dead beat," the Pay-roll Brigade won't fish.

A great deal of credit is due the Aldermen who, at last Monday night's meeting of the City Council, effectually squelched the outrageous plan to rush through the City Council a fire ordinance which, in its emasculated and decrepit condition, was simply a mockery of the fire horror which has shocked the world.

Judging from the tactics adopted at last Monday's Council meeting it would seem that the policy of both branches of the administration was to keep the theater-going public still at the mercy of greedy managers and a worthless city executive. Fortunately for the time being at least it was blocked.

The city father who had in readiness an order for the immediate reopening, "under certain conditions," of the playhouses in this city, and which, according to the program was to follow on

the heels of the weakened and comparatively worthless fire ordinance, was compelled by force of circumstances to keep it there. It would be well if it could be kept there indefinitely.

One million dollars is said to have been placed at the disposal of the relatives of the fire victims to be used in the prosecution of those responsible for the disaster. Such a fund ought to be ample to establish the guilt of all concerned, from the highest to the lowest, in the series of events and conditions which resulted in the disaster.

Too much credit cannot be accorded Hon. John C. Fetzer for his excellent work in the line of adequate fire protection for the public schools. As a member of the Board of Education Mr. Fetzer was the first to draw attention to the necessity of taking this matter up. Subsequent developments have shown his suggestions to be most timely. As a result of his action work in this direction has been promptly begun. Two hundred fire alarm boxes are to be placed in the school buildings at once, and the installation of fire escapes, means of egress, drilling of the pupils, etc., will follow without delay.

Nobody is surprised at the antagonistic attitude of Harrison towards the efforts of the citizens' committee on crime. Chicago's mayorette is of too small caliber to appreciate and courteously acknowledge the excellent spirit and self-sacrifice of these excellent citizens who would aid in the suppression of crime and the uplifting of the city from the mire in which it has wallowed under the regime of Harrisonism.

Neither the Mayor nor the Chief of Police have thought it worth their while to attend a single meeting of the Citizens' Committee for the suppression of crime. Perhaps they fear the city might lose its identity.

If the Board of Education would spend a little money in fire escapes for the school buildings and do a smaller business in real estate options for some time to come the public would be better pleased.

Cause and Effect: The reduction in the number of saloons may cause a reduction in the number of policemen. Here is a conundrum for some of our reformers to figure out.

Without doubt the Payroll Brigade has good reason to be hot under the collar these days. The Mayor has introduced time clocks in the various offices with the remark that there will be no more loafing in the City Hall. Branded by their chief first as grafters

and then as loafers, the members of the P. B. will have a fine time when they are separated from the public crib and forced to work for a living.

A snug little additional appropriation of \$3,000 has been voted to the Council Graft Committee by the Finance Committee. Many people think the game is hardly worth the candle.

Look out for another resurrection of the water meter grab ordinance. It is about due again.

Harrison must think that a great number of our ministers of the gospel are deceitfully plain spoken.

Ninety per cent of the people of Chicago have their minds made up as to where the responsibility for the slaughter of the innocents really belongs.

Miss Elizabeth Haley, the courageous school teacher, evidently possesses the faculty of cutting a spade a spade.

Here is a very pertinent question put by one of our most eloquent pulpit-keepers—Rev. Frank Smith, of Warren Avenue Congregational Church: "What shall we say of the Mayor of a city who solemnly swears to enforce the laws of the State and the municipality, and who then goes into office and elects what laws he will enforce, and what laws he will permit to be violated?" We can imagine how the overwhelming majority of the people of Chicago would answer that question to-day.

Now that \$50,000 additional has been voted for the street cleaning fund the question arises what became of the hundreds of thousands voted in the original appropriation for the same purpose a year ago? The streets speak for themselves in the matter.

Colonel E. B. Bliss made an effective argument in behalf of the Chicago City Railway before the Local Transportation Committee Tuesday last. Among other things Mr. Bliss, who is one of the ablest lawyers of the Chicago bar, made a scathing reference to the anarchistic and socialistic organizations which have interested themselves in this discussion. Colonel Bliss closed by making an offer to the city of 5 per cent of the total gross receipts of the company for twenty years.

By the way, how did it come about that Harrison's hired men in charge of the Council chamber permitted not only the galleries but the floor of the Council chamber to be packed with a lobby of stage hands and theater employees to hoot and hiss at the Al-

dermen who were endeavoring to make a recurrence of the Iroquois holocaust impossible?

When it comes to making asinine suggestions in reference to matters of grave and even tragic interest to the people some of our city fathers are strictly in it. One Alderman on Monday night put in a resolution to inspect the Union League Club for the purpose of ascertaining if the fire law is complied with. The proposition was promptly and properly smothered.

Sombody suggests that the people of Chicago make a wooden calf or a clay rooster, label it Mayor, and set it up in the City Hall as a substitute for the present incumbent of the mayoral chair. We agree with the suggestion. It would be a decided improvement, as it would save the \$10,000 a year salary.

It seems no more than reasonable that the police and fire departments should organize for their own protection.

Of course there was no politics in Harrison's permit to the theater known as Thalia Hall, located at 18th and Alport streets, to reopen on Sunday night. Oh, no!

Truly times change and men change with them. The mere mention of William Jennings Bryan's name acted as a sort of bugaboo at the recent meeting of the Democratic National Committee.

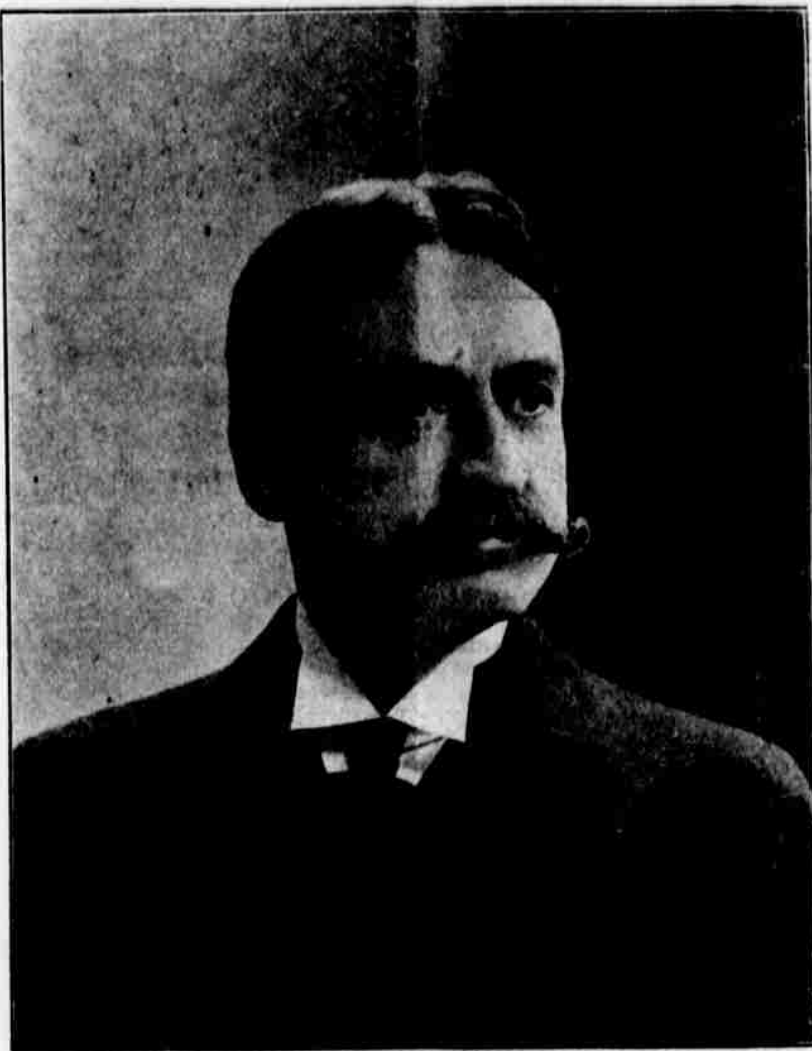
This is a peculiarly inappropriate time to talk about reducing the police force. Reduce the army of loafers that has to be tabbed by time clocks.

Labor unionism run mad was thoroughly exemplified the other day when a man was peremptorily forbidden to shingle his own house and compelled to employ union workmen. A man will not be allowed to shave himself next.

Permits to violate the law are nothing new under the administration which has afflicted Chicago for nearly seven years.

In organizing to protect themselves the policemen and firemen should make no mistake. It is the haughty Harrison graft committee that they will have to fight; they have nothing to fear from the Citizens' Anti-Crime Committee, which is gunning for bigger game.

It is not the poor patrolmen or firemen who need investigation, but those who are responsible for the crippling, misdirection and disorganization of these once superb departments.



HON. B. A. ECKHART.

One of Chicago's Most Successful Business Men and Public Spirited Citizens.

WHY CHICAGO LOST

In the Gallant Fight Made to Bring the Democratic National Convention to This City.

National Committeemen Say Chicago Lies Prone Under a Reign of Lawlessness and Crime.

Disgrace Accompanies a Signal Defeat—Fruits of Seven Years of Worthless City Administration.

Our Excuse for a Mayor Neither Present Nor Represented to Defend the City.

Goodrich, Hopkins and Others Make Gallant Struggle, but Too Much Harrisonism Overwhelms Them.

Chicago lost the Democratic national convention because of the reputation for lawlessness and crime the city has acquired during the past seven years.

Under the Harrison administration Chicago has lost many things, but it has retained for the struggle for the Democratic national convention to demonstrate that it has lost its reputation as a law-abiding community in the eyes of the country, if not of the world.

It was openly stated during the contest for the convention that there was no respect for life or protection for property in this city at present, and Chicago's Mayor was not there to stand up for the good name of the city which has elected him four times to the office of chief executive.

Not only was Harrison not present to defend Chicago, but his representative failed also to put in an appearance.

While the reputation of Chicago was being torn to shreds before the eyes of the country, its poor little excuse for a Mayor was at home watching the pay roll, unrepresented either in person or by representative, to say a word in the city's behalf.

Other men, true men and real Democrats, were there to stand up for the good name of the city, but Harrison was not there, nor was there any authorized representative of the administration under which have occurred the things that have brought this dishonor upon the metropolis of the West.

The Mayor of St. Louis was there and spoke ably and manfully for his city. He found time to leave St. Louis on a trip that meant something for the business interests and the glory of the city of which he is the chief magistrate, and this, too, notwithstanding the enormous demands of the World's Fair upon his time and resources in addition to the usual duties of the Mayor of such a city as St. Louis.

The only time Chicago's excuse for a Mayor goes on a trip the destination is Oklahoma or the Bad Lands, when he goes with his pipe, his fishing rod and fowling piece, and returns with a dead duck and a stale fish story, to find that some frightful crime has been perpetrated or some dreadful disaster has occurred during his absence and while the city has been suffering from its chronic condition of no government.

The Mayor of St. Louis (and St. Louis has a real Mayor) was before the national committee, spoke for his people's cause, and St. Louis got the convention.

It is not the loss of the convention in itself, for Chicago can stand that, that makes the bile of Chicagoans rise, but it is that the incident should have been made to throw ridicule and dishonor upon Chicago, and the fact that neither its chief executive nor anybody to represent him thought it worth while to be present to repel the attack upon the good name of the city.

Says a contemporary:

"Hon. Adams A. Goodrich, who as chairman of Chicago's convention committee presented the city's claims to the national committee, felt it to be his duty to defend the city against the criticism and condemnation of visiting Democrats who objected to the convention being awarded to Chicago on the ground that Chicago is the home of lawlessness. Mr. Goodrich performed

this part of his duty with feeling and eloquence, but obviously without avail." The incubus of Harrisonism was too much to be overcome even by the eloquence of the great lawyer.

Listen to this extract from a Washington dispatch:

"You know Judge Goodrich," said Col. Ranshman (Senator Gorman's personal representative), "that Chicago has the reputation of being the most lawless city in the country; that crime of every description is rampant there; that your police force is inadequate or incompetent to check it; that rumor says that criminals and police are in league, and that you have nothing but unsafe places of amusement. I do not think it is fair for Chicago to come here and ask the national committee for the convention under the circumstances."

Judge Goodrich's wrath blazed up at this, and he manfully and eloquently defended the city of Chicago from the stain that has been put upon it during the city administration of the past seven years. Other members of the committee did likewise, but nothing could stem the tide, and Chicago went down not only in defeat, but disgrace.

Well, what do you think now of seven consecutive years of Harrisonism?

New York and Chicago both were represented by an ex-Mayor. Hon. John P. Hopkins did hereafter work for Chicago, but the Yellow Kid administration was too much to overcome in the fight for the Democratic convention.

Evidently the rest of the country believe that the streets of Chicago belong not to the people, but to the hold-up men and the anarchists. And there is one year and three months more of the Yellow Kid!

Republicans of the Northwest Side have formed a formidable combination for the purpose of exercising an independent influence in the next county convention. Headed by such wheel-horses of the party as Judge McEwen, Hon. Philip Knopf, James Reddick, County Clerk Olsen, I. H. Himes, Adam Wolf, Ephraim Banning, Olaf Severson, W. W. Wheelock and Kiekham Scanlan, this combination is bound to be heard from in no uncertain terms in the county convention, and all other councils of the party.

Five downtown theaters were inspected in ninety minutes the other day by Harrison's Special Council Committee of Investigation. The public may judge from this what kind of an "investigation" to expect from Harrison and his satellites. They can also estimate just how beneficial the results of that investigation will be.

Governor Yates did a manly thing when he appointed Hon. Eldridge Haney to the vacancy on the Superior Court bench. Eldridge Haney was the friend of Richard Yates at a very important period in the latter's political career, ably supporting him throughout his entire campaign for Governor. Governor Yates has shown that he is the kind of man who does not go back on his friends. Judge